

April 21, 2014 Community Open House - WSU Metroplex

Feedback Received (04/30/14)

Attendance - 27 people (plus 4 Committee members and 6 city staff)

Staff Summary of Feedback -

- The established urban core emerged as the priority area for future infrastructure investment, growth and redevelopment, followed next in ranking by the downtown – the suburbs were a distant third in ranking.
- Quality of life infrastructure investments are important to ensure future job and business growth in our community.
- Strong support for investment in public transit and libraries.
- Reinvestment in the city's existing water, sewer and road infrastructure needs to be a priority.

Detailed Responses to Questions -

► ***Handout Question: How Best for Wichita to Grow? Rank the following three Wichita growth areas according to which you think best supports the future growth, prosperity and quality of life of our community.***
1=best, 2=second best, 3=third best (20 complete responses)

Rank

1	Established Urban Core	60% best	40% 2 nd best	0% 3 rd best
2	Downtown	40% best	50% 2 nd best	10% 3 rd best
3	Suburbs	0% best	10% 2 nd best	90% 3 rd best

General Thoughts and Comments: (Responses organized by themes)

Growth patterns – urban core and downtown

- The downtown core area needs to be the new focus of investment to attract the younger generation
- Focus investment in the downtown and established urban core
- Place more investment emphasis in the established urban core – that in turn will also indirectly benefit the downtown
- Must reinvest in our core urbanized areas – replace and maintain
- Urban core needs investment attention.
- Don't let the center die out – it's a vital part of our city
- Need to concentrate infrastructure investments in the core areas
- Develop our urban core and downtown areas with new infrastructure, green space, improved transit and bike/ped facilities, Central Library, and arts/entertainment complex
- Need to encourage redevelopment within the urban core – improve existing water, sewer and road infrastructure
- Need to focus on adequately funding the repair/replacement of our failing infrastructure and improving transit (Scenario #3). This will create jobs, economic development especially in the urban core

Growth patterns – suburbs

- Enough investment in suburban growth has already occurred over the last 20 years.
- Foolish to expand the city boundaries further out with rising costs of transportation
- Neither of the three scenarios presents planned and purposeful growth

Transit

- Increase transit service to demand areas and increase frequency of service
- Expand public transit
- Improve public transit service throughout the city and county
- Improvements to transit system needed to serve those who can't drive

Libraries

- New Central Library and a neighborhood library in Oaklawn would improve quality of life
- Downtown needs the benefit of a new Central Library
- Central Library enhances services to the branch libraries

Quality of Life Investments

- Appreciate the parks and green space located throughout the city
- Investment in city parks is important – especially in McAdams where League 42 is headquartered to support inner-city youth
- A strong workforce depends on a strong quality of life
- Retaining and creating new jobs and businesses requires quality of life investments in our community

Other Investments

- Investments need to focus on maintaining our infrastructure, reliable water source, and job growth
- Highest priority is maintaining existing water, sewer and street infrastructure – once an adequate water supply has been secured
- More information and education needed if the governing bodies expect voters to support a referendum vote on a sales tax
- Combine city and county public safety services
- Need to remove sub-par rental properties and abandoned structures in the urban core
- Consider artificial turf requirements in new homeowner green spaces – prohibit planting of fescue grasses in new home construction areas
- Eliminate the use of special assessment financing tools to fund new development – costs of new street and utilities should be included in the initial purchase cost of the lot/home
- Need to keep taxes low in order to encourage people to stay in community
- The decision to not allow a casino in Sedgwick County has cost our community major revenues that could have been used to help fund the infrastructure investment costs we are currently facing. I will be voting against any proposed sales tax increases

► ***Board Question: Please list important criteria that you would like elected officials to consider as they make future community infrastructure spending and cost-reduction decisions.***

- Quality of life investments:
 - critical to new jobs and businesses
 - key to attracting a strong workforce – need a strong library system and a new Central Library
 - parks, especially McAdams (home to League 42)
 - Dunbar Theater
 - major renovations to Lawrence Dumont is key to Wichita's future baseball growth
 - need a new Central Library designed properly to serve the public
- Long-term water supply:
 - recycle water
 - establish rebate program for water conservation
- Transit system investment:
 - improve transit system (Scenario #3)
 - improve regular and special Wichita Transit services
 - create a regional transit system
- Improve the quality of the Wichita Police Department
- Eliminate the use of special assessment financing tools to fund new development – costs of new street and utilities should be included in the initial purchase cost of the lot/home
- Job creation
- Consideration of private sector development plans
- Focus investments on entertainment and tourist attractions
- Focus investments on existing infrastructure improvements (Scenario #3)

► **Board Question:** *What thoughts and comments do you have?* (Responses organized by themes)

Libraries

- A new Central Library is important to community economic development and literacy
- Quality of libraries is key to quality of community life
- Expand the Westlink library and build the new Central Library
- Libraries are hallmarks of a city and influence community attractiveness
- Neighborhood library needed for Oaklawn
- Investment in existing roads, sewers and a new Central Library is a priority (supported through a 1 cent sales tax)

Miscellaneous

- Consider medical marijuana as a way to raise revenues
- A free spay/neuter facility for cats/dogs would save ¼ million dollars annually to euthanize unwanted animals
- A city 'trap/neuter/return' ordinance for cats would protect community cats
- Tear down the chain link fence around McAdams Park
- Investing in health care infrastructure will create additional jobs
- There are tunnels already for a train
- Very effective presentation of information – thanks!